

THE
INTEREST
OF THE
Merchants and Manufacturers
OF
GREAT-BRITAIN,
IN THE
PRESENT CONTEST
WITH THE
COLONIES,
STATED AND CONSIDERED.

C O R K :

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THE contest between Great-Britain and her Colonies, being now arrived at a height that calls for some speedy decision, and this contest having been represented as only a dispute between the administration and the colonies, the following short state of the case is submitted to the consideration of every candid Englishman; from which it will appear, how far the merchants and traders in this country are interested in it, and on which side they ought to wish the decision to fall.

It is admitted on the part of Great-Britain, that the Colonies are part of the dominions of the Crown, that the inhabitants are the subjects of the Crown, and intitled, by birth, to all the rights and franchises of Englishmen, born within the island of Great-Britain; and in consequence every native of the Colonies is eligible to, and many of them actually enjoy offices and employments in the state, and seats in parliament, and may be the King's chief ministers in Great-Britain. In all foreign countries, they have the same protection with the King's English subjects, and enjoy the same advantages of treaties and alliances. Their persons and properties are equally protected by the laws of England, and they may, equally with the natives of Great-Britain, become proprietors, by purchase or inheritance, of any lands within the island of Great-Britain.

THE possessions of the Crown in America are immensely extensive, and the island of Great-Britain, compared with them, appears very inconsiderable. No art or power can enlarge Great-Britain, but there is abundant scope in America for making Additions, still more extensive, to what the Crown already possesses there.

THIS most important difference in the circumstances of the two territories requires a different plan of policy to be adopted in respect to the culture and improvement of each. But still the personal rights of the inhabitants ought to continue the same; and the prosperity and happiness of the subjects in the Colonies ought to be equally attended to, and promoted by government, as that of the subjects in England, for they are equally the King's subjects and Englishmen.

THE lands in America have been granted by the Crown on very cheap terms to the occupiers; and where a country is so very extensive, and the inhabitants few, the lands must continue cheap for many ages, in comparison of the price of lands in Great-Britain. Should then the occupier of the American lands cultivate the same products as are cultivated in Great-Britain, and have equally liberty to carry them to the same market, they must presently destroy the commerce and culture of Great-Britain, by selling at a less price—Now nothing could argue greater folly and wickedness, in any government, than the suffering the people of the ancient dominions to be destroyed, for the sake of raising a new Empire, and new subjects in another

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another part of the world.—Wisdom, justice and policy, therefore, required that the means to be used to forward the prosperity of the new dominions, should be such as not to injure the old; and that, where all parts cannot have the same advantages, compensation should be made, for what is withheld in one way, by the grant of superior advantages in another.

THE right to the soil of America is allowed to have been in the Crown of England, antecedent to the settlement of any English subjects there; for the first, and all future adventurers carried with them grants from the Crown, of the lands on which they settled; and all the lands in the Colonies are at this day held by their occupiers, under titles derived from the Crown. The Crown had, therefore, a right to prescribe conditions to those who obtained those grants; and the grantees were bound, in law and equity, to a performance of those conditions. Moreover, the adventurers in this new country stood in need of the assistance and succour of their fellow subjects in England. They were unable to subsist, much less to protect themselves. The bounty, the confidence, and humanity of individuals in England were freely exercised towards them; and the power of the state, raised and maintained at the sole expence of the people of England, was fully exerted in their behalf. The people of England have, therefore, a right to reap advantage from the success of the adventurers.

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UNDER these two titles, of a right to the soil in the Crown, and a right to compensation in the people of England, let us view the conduct of the Legislature (which comprehends both) towards the Colonies. In respect to the persons of the natives of the Colonies, no distinction or difference has ever been made. There is not a single Act of Parliament, from the first establishment of the Colonies to this day, which makes a distinction between a man born in England, and a man born in America. The original equality has been inviolably adhered to. The same law and rights are for a native of America in England, as for an Englishman. And an Englishman is, in America, subject to the same law, and claims no other rights than a native there.

THE most violent partizan of the Colonies can here then have no ground of complaint; for neither the Crown or the people of England have here made any claim, or sought compensation.

THE lands of America, and their products, have alone been the objects upon which they have made any demands; and whether they have asserted their claims in an arbitrary, cruel, and unjust manner, as the Colonies say they have, we shall soon see.

THE people of England and the American adventurers being so differently circumstanced, it required no great sagacity to discover that, as there were many commodities which America could supply on better terms than they could be raised in England, so must it be much more for the Colonies

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nies advantage to take others from England, than
 attempt to make them themselves. The American
 lands were cheap, covered with woods, and abounded
 with native commodities. The first attention of
 the settlers was necessarily engaged in cutting down
 the timber, and clearing the ground for culture;
 for before they had supplied themselves with pro-
 visions, and had hands to spare from agriculture,
 it was impossible they could set about manufactur-
 ing. England, therefore, undertook to supply
 them with manufactures, and either purchased
 herself, or found markets for the timber the Colo-
 nists cut down upon their lands, or the fish they
 caught upon their coasts. It was soon discovered
 that the tobacco plant was a native of, and flour-
 ished in Virginia. It had been also planted in
 England, and was found to delight in the soil.
 The Legislature, however, wisely and equitably
 considering that England had variety of products,
 and Virginia had no other to buy her necessities
 with, passed an act prohibiting the people of
 England from planting tobacco, and thereby giv-
 ing the monopoly of that plant to the Colonies.
 As the inhabitants increased, and the lands became
 more cultivated, further and new advantages were
 thrown in the way of the American Colonies.
 All foreign markets, as well as Great-Britain,
 were open for their timber and provisions, and
 the British West India Islands were prohibited from
 purchasing those commodities from any other than
 them. And since England has found itself in
 danger of wanting a supply of timber, and it has
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been judged necessary to confine the export from America to Great-Britain and Ireland, full and ample indemnity has been given to the Colonies for the loss of a choice of markets in Europe, by very large bounties paid out of the revenue of Great-Britain, upon the importation of American timber. And as a further encouragement and reward to them for clearing their lands, bounties are given upon the tar and pitch, which are made from their decayed and useless trees; and the very ashes of their lops and branches, are made of value by the late bounty on American pot-ashes. The soil and climate of the Northern Colonies having been found well adapted to the culture of flax and hemp, bounties equal to half the first cost of those commodities have been granted by Parliament, payable out of the British revenue, upon their importation into Great-Britain. The growth of rice in the Southern Colonies has been greatly encouraged, by prohibiting the importation of that grain into the British dominions from other parts, and allowing it to be transported from the Colonies to the foreign territories in America, and even to the Southern parts of Europe. Indigo has been nurtured in those Colonies by great parliamentary bounties, which have been long paid upon the importation into Great-Britain; and of late are allowed to remain, even when it is carried out again to foreign markets. Silk and wine have also been objects of parliamentary munificence and will one day probably become considerable American products under that encouragement.

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In which of these instances, it may be demanded
has the Legislature shown itself partial to the peo-
ple of England and unjust to the Colonies? or
wherein have the Colonies been injured? We hear
much of the restraints under which the trade of
the Colonies is laid by Acts of Parliament, for
the advantage of Great-Britain, but the restraints
under which the people of Great-Britain are bid
by Acts of Parliament for the advantage of the
Colonies, are carefully kept out of sight; and yet
upon a comparison, the one will be found full as
grievous as the other. For, is it a greater hard-
ship on the Colonies, to be confined in some
instances to the markets of Great-Britain for the
sale of their commodities, than it is on the peo-
ple of Great-Britain to be obliged to buy those
commodities from them only? If the island Co-
lonies are obliged to give the people of Great-
Britain the pre-emption of their sugar and coffee,
is it not a greater hardship on the people of
Great-Britain to be restrained from purchasing
sugar and Coffee from other countries, where
they could get those commodities much cheaper
than the Colonies make them pay for them?
Could not our manufacturers have Indigo much
better and cheaper from France and Spain than
from Carolina? and yet is there not a duty im-
posed by Acts of Parliament on French and
Spanish Indigo, that it may come to our manu-
facturers at a dearer rate than Carolina Indigo,
though a bounty is also given out of *the money of*
the people of England to the Carolina Planter, to
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enable him to sell his Indigo upon a *par* with the French and Spanish? But the instance which has already been taken notice of, the Act which prohibited the culture of the tobacco plant in Great-Britain or Ireland, is still more in point, and a more striking proof of the justice and impartiality of the supreme Legislature; for what restraints, let me ask, are the Colonies laid under, which bear so strong marks of hardship, as the prohibiting the farmers in Great-Britain and Ireland from raising, upon their own lands, a product which is become almost a necessary of life to them and their families? And this most extraordinary restraint is laid upon them, for the avowed and the purpose of giving Virginia and Maryland a monopoly of that commodity, and obliging the people of Great-Britain and Ireland to buy all the tobacco they consume from them, at the prices they think fit to sell it for. The annals of no country that ever planted Colonies, can produce such an instance as this of regard and kindness to their Colonies, and of restraint upon the inhabitants of the Mother Country for their advantage. Nor is there any restraint laid upon the inhabitants of the Colonies in return, which carries with it so great appearance of hardship, although the people of Great-Britain and Ireland have, from their regard and affection to the Colonies, submitted to it without a murmur for near a Century.

It is true the Legislature, in this as well as in other instances, has had a view to divert the Colonists from manufacturing; but has not that
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object been pursued by means the most generous
and just? Ought the Colonists to complain that
they are *diverted* from working up their flax and
hemp, by getting a better price for it rough, than
they could hope to obtain by manufacturing it?
Or is it blameable in the Legislature to excite
them to the culture of commodities which yield
a better profit from their cheap lands, than they
could have by employing their labour in manu-
facturing? But why do they not manufacture?
They are not hindered from making any commo-
dity they might think fit for their own use, or
erecting any machine for the purpose, except
mills for smelting iron. The only reason is, that
they find it more their interest to cultivate their
lands, and attend the fishery, than to manufacture.
Their interest it is alone which restrains them,
and such is the wisdom, the equity, the bounty of
the government, they are so impatient of, as to
employ no other means to *divert* them from ma-
nufactures, than by giving them greater profits
for their labour in other things. This is a point
which cannot be too much inculcated, for it ought
to be universally known and considered, especially
by the trading part of this kingdom. I therefore
repeat it, that the only means employed by the
Legislature, for *diverting* the Colonies from ma-
nufacturing, is the giving them better prices for
their labour in other things: And the Colonies
well know this to be the case, and they conduct
themselves according to that knowledge; for in
every instance where they think they can employ
their labour profitably in manufactures, they do
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it. This the people of England do not know, but they ought to be made acquainted with it: They imagine the inhabitants in the Colonies are prohibited from making any thing for themselves, much more from trading in their own manufactures: Whereas the fact is, they are prohibited from making no one thing for their own use, or from exporting any one of their own manufactures, except hats, wool and woollen goods. And they do make many things, and export several manufactures, to the exclusion of English manufactures of the same kinds. The New-England people import from the foreign and the British Islands, very large quantities of cotton, which they spin and work up with a linen yarn into a stuff, like that made in Manchester, with which they clothe themselves and their neighbours. Hats are manufactured in Carolina, Pennsylvania, and in other Colonies. Soap and candles, and all kinds of wood-work, are made in the Northern Colonies, and exported to the Southern. Coaches, chariots, chaises, and chairs, are also made in the Northern Colonies, and sent down to the Southern. Coach-harness, and many other kinds of leather manufactures, are likewise made in the Northern Colonies, and sent down to the Southern; and large quantities of shoes have lately been exported from thence to the West-India Islands. Linens are made to a great amount in Pennsylvania; and cordage and other hemp manufactures are carried on in many places with great success: and foundery ware, axes, and other iron tools and utensils, are also become articles

articles of commerce, with which the Southern Colonies are supplied from the Northern. Thus while the Legislature is paying the money of the people of England in bounties to one part of the American subjects, another is employed in rivalling the people of England in several of their most valuable manufactures.

Thus far, at least, the conduct of Great-Britain towards the Colonies cannot justly be taxed with oppression, nor the comparative situation of America deemed unequal and disadvantageous: But we are told by the advocates for American claims, that the profit of all their labours centers here, and that the inhabitants of America are condemned to work for the people of England; let us therefore examine the truth of these two propositions.—If it be true that the inhabitants of America are condemned to work for the people of England, is it not equally true that the people of England are condemned to work for the people in the Colonies? Nay, not for their fellow-subjects there only, but for the slaves of their fellow subjects! If a planter in Virginia raises tobacco for the English merchant, does not the English manufacturer make him clothing for himself and his negroes in return; and wherein can the one be said to work for the other's advantage, more than the other does for his? Do any of the Colonies send their products to England for nothing, or do they take any thing from England in payment which they do not want? Does England fix prices upon their products, and say, You shall sell them to us for so much; or does she insist upon their

their buying her commodities at higher prices than her own natives pay, or than she sells them for to other countries? Nothing of all this is pretended to be the case; then pray in what sense is it that the people of the Colonies can be said to work for the people of England, other than that in which the people of England work for them? The thresher may be said, it is true, to work for the miller; but does not the miller work also for the thresher? But the profit of all the labour of the Colonies centers in England. If this be true, the consequence will plainly shew it; for no state or society of men was ever known to thrive by unprofitable labour. Whence then arises the present wealth and greatness of America (of which we hear so much upon other occasions) if England has reaped the fruit of all the labour of the Colonies? The settlers, we all know, did not carry great riches with them, and whence could they have acquired them, but from the profits of their labour? But the trade of England, say they, has been greatly augmented by the Colonies. It is by no means clear that the same increase would not have happened if the Colonies had never existed; for England had many avenues open for her commercial industry. But, without pursuing that consideration, from what source did the Colonies derive the ability, and the means of trading with England? Who paid for the axe and the saw with which they cut down the tree, and made it into boards, to cover their huts at their first landing? Or through whose credit have they since built towns, improved their farms, and erected for them-

themselves stately houses? Is it not to the English merchants they are indebted for all their opulence? We see a recent instance of this in the Ceded Islands; whilst the English merchants gave them credit, the adventurers were making large strides to wealth and grandeur. The value of lands was every day raising; plantations were settling, and towns springing out of the woods; but the instant that credit was withheld, the bubble burst, and the airy scene vanished like a dream; distress and calamity succeeded to opulence and parade, and the highest estimated lands can no longer find purchasers at any a price: Now, had the English merchants continued to give credit, and make advances for these adventurers, there is no doubt their projects would at length have succeeded; they would have raised products, and, by industry and good management acquired fortunes. What then should we have thought of them, or what ought we to have thought of them, if, when they came to make remittances to the English merchants, they should have complained, that it was hard they should be condemned to work for the people of England; that England reaped all the fruits of their labour and industry, and that it was the highest cruelty and injustice to oblige them to send their products to England, that the English merchants might gain a commission on the sale of them.

THE Northern Colonies, it is true, have not had such ample credit with the English merchants as the Islands, but the circumstances under which the planters in both made their settlements, are

not so dissimilar as to render what has been stated respecting the one, inapplicable to the other. The great amount of their debt to the English merchants, is a full proof that it was upon the stock of the people of England they have hitherto subsisted.

The merchants in the Colonies, no more than the planters in the continent, are wealthy men. They buy their goods in England upon nine months credit at least; the planter is supplied by them, throughout the year, upon the credit of his crop at the end of it. The planter has his house to build, or improvements to make, or new land to clear and take in, all which requires ready money, and therefore, when his first crop comes, he must sell it for cash, and cannot pay the merchant any thing towards the reduction of his debt that year. The acquisition of the next year's crop requires a fresh advance; hence the planter becomes indebted to the merchant for two year's supply before he makes him any payment; and as it very seldom happens that at the end of the second year he pays the expence of one, he goes on increasing his debt, but at the same time increasing his estate in a much greater proportion; and all this time the English merchant, who supports the whole, is without any returns.

Thus it is that England reaps the advantage of all the toil and labour of the Colonies. She pays for the purchase of the land, for the labour employed in clearing it, for the maintaining the stock necessary for its cultivation; her return is a commission upon the sale of the produce, with a moderate

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tal advanced, while all the benefit of the increased
value belongs solely to the Americans.

That much of what has been advanced will be
still more evident from a comparison of the state
of the Colonies of other nations with our own.
We have seen the slow progress the French made
in Canada the many years they had it; and the
large strides it is making to wealth and impor-
tance since it became a British Colony. Grenada
too has flourished in a still greater degree, and the
same cause has wrought the happy change in the
circumstances of both, which is no other than the
superior credit given to the planters by the English
merchants, to what they had from the French
merchants. Now if we inquire into the cause of
this unbounded confidence and credit given by
the English merchants to the Colonies, from
which the Colonies have reaped so great advan-
tage, it will come out to be *the security which they
have for their property by the operation of the laws
of England in the Colonies*; they give no such credit
to the subjects of other states, either in Europe
or America: And yet there are countries in
which they might lay out their money to greater
profit than in the British Colonies; but in foreign
countries they cannot be certain of a legal security
for their property, or a fair and effectual means
of recovering it; whereas in the British Colonies
they know the laws of England follow their pro-
perty, and secures it for them in the deepest re-
cesses of the woods. Take from them that secu-
rity, and there is an end of their confidence,
and consequently an effectual check to the
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prosperity of the Colonies. And indeed good reason it should be so, for there is no want of evidence to shew how willing the Colonies are to avail themselves of Acts of their own Assemblies to injure their British creditors; witness the attempts in Jamaica and Virginia to make the lands and negroes freehold, and not liable to the payment of book debts; so that a planter might buy land and negroes on English credit, and leave them to his children, without paying a shilling to the English merchant, with whose money he bought them; and witness also a late act of the assembly of Grenada, postponing the payments due to their English Creditors for Eighteen Months. These and such like practices in the Colonies, gave occasion to the Act of Parliament the 5th of George the Second, for subjecting lands and negroes in the Colonies to the payment of English book debts, which may truly be called the *palladium* of Colony credit, and the English merchants grand security; and yet this Act of Parliament is one of those which are now complained of by the Colonies; and the British merchant is now modestly desired to apply to Parliament for its repeal, and thus ruin their trade and fortunes with their own hands.* But indeed

* The following petition of several merchants of London to the King in the year 1732, and the report of the Lords of Trade thereupon, will shew the necessity of the interference of Parliament in the British merchant's behalf, and the great ground there was for passing the Act of that year, for the merchants' security, which the Colonies now want to

subject are not only in many other Acts, would not be so much as to destroy their security, if the Colonies

to let him

"Sheweth,

"That the merchants trading to the Colonies and Plantations have great sums of money due to them from the inhabitants; and as the laws now stand in some of the Colonies and Plantations, your Majesty's subjects residing in Great-Britain are left without any remedy for the recovery of their just debts, or have such remedy as is very partial and precarious: whereby they are liable to be considerable sufferers in their property, and are greatly discouraged in their trade to America.

"That in several of the said Colonies and Plantations greater and higher duties and impositions are laid on the ships and goods belonging to your Petitioners, and other persons residing in this kingdom, than are laid on the goods and ships of persons inhabiting the said Colonies and plantations to the great discouragement of Great-Britain,

"Wherefore your Petitioners most humbly beseech your Majesty, that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to take the premises into your royal consideration, and give your Petitioners such relief as to your Majesty, in your great wisdom, shall seem meet."

This petition having been referred to the Lords of Trade, their Lordships, in their report thereon, take notice,

"That in duly attending the execution of the law, after a verdict hath been obtained in favour of the plaintiff, the defendant could as

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The right of the Parliament to impose taxes,
or the expediency of exercising it over the Colo-
nies, is now no longer the subject of dispute. All
the late declarations of the Colonies deny, in ex-
press terms, the authority of the Legislature to
bind them in any case whatsoever. The
purpose of their opposition to the execution
of Acts of Parliament, and of their ob-
struction of the commerce of the people of Eng-
land.

I acquit them of any intention of separating
from Great-Britain; for I believe them too
to renounce all the advantages of being treated as
Englishmen in Great-Britain and throughout the
world; of enjoying the protection of her fleet
and armies equally with the people of England;
and at the same time, neither contributing reve-
nue to their support, or dealing with her for any
thing which they can buy cheaper, or sell dearer
elsewhere. They would no doubt like to con-
tinue to have the monopoly of supplying the Bri-
tish West-India Islands with lumber and provi-
sions; to have the monopoly of supplying Great
Britain and Ireland with tobacco; to receive large
bounties upon other of their products out of the
revenue of England; to have the advantage of
fishing on the English fishing-banks of New-
foundland; and in the gulph and river of the
English conquered Colony of Quebec, provided
they continued to pay no revenue, were subject to
no restraints upon their trade, but might carry
their commodities wherever they thought fit, im-
port all sorts of goods from all countries, and lay
out

out their money wherever they found they could
 buy cheapest. This is all very natural, and no
 one can blame the Colonies for taking what is
 so evidently for their own interest; but that they
 should expect the people of England, the trading
 part especially, to countenance them in their pur-
 suits of a plan so manifestly ruinous to them,
 is indeed such a proof of their contempt for our
 understandings, as no people ever gave before.
 They plainly tell the British merchants, "Gentle-
 men, we have now made fortunes out of your
 capital, and we find that the people in England
 pay such heavy taxes for the payment of the
 interest of a debt, which they contracted for
 our defence; and for the maintenance of a
 military force, of which we enjoy the protec-
 tion; that some of their manufactures come
 higher charged to us, than we can get the like
 for from Holland or France: We also find,
 that from the same cause they cannot afford to
 give as high prices for some of our Commo-
 dities, as we can sell them for in other coun-
 tries. Now there are certain Acts of Parlia-
 ment, which oblige us to come to you for what
 we want; and to carry to you many of our
 commodities in payment, we desire therefore
 that you will assist us in our endeavours to set
 aside the authority of these laws, that we may
 trade where we will; and come no more to
 you but when we cannot do so well elsewhere.
 There is another thing too, which we want you
 to join us in; we are prevented by an Act of
 Parliament from entailing our estates to the
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 ir contempt for our
 ever gave before.
 merchants, "Gentle-
 fortunes out of your
 e people in England
 the payment of the
 they contracted in
 maintainance of a
 e enjoy the protec-
 manufactures come
 we can get the like
 ce: We also find,
 ey cannot afford to
 me of our Commo-
 for in other coun-
 ain Acts of Parlia-
 me to you for what
 o you many of our
 we desire therefore
 our endeavours to set
 laws, that we may
 come no more to
 o so well elsewhere,
 which we want you
 ented by an Act of
 our estates to the
 "pre-

"prejudice of our English creditors: we now
 "owe them about four millions, and if this Act
 "was out of our way, we could make all our
 "families rich at once, by purchasing lands, and
 "building houses, with this money, and settling
 "them upon our children, instead of paying our
 "English creditors: but as we are afraid the
 "Parliament might perceive our drift, in apply-
 "ing for repeals of these laws, or if they even
 "repealed them *now*, they might hereafter re-
 "enact them, or others of a like nature, which
 "would defeat our purpose of rising upon the
 "runs of England: we have taken up a reso-
 "lution of getting rid of all these Acts at once,
 "and at the same time making ourselves secure
 "against all future Acts that might be made to
 "our prejudice, or for your benefit. This reso-
 "lution is no other than to deny the authority of
 "the Legislature to make any Acts whatever to
 "bind us. In this our grand purpose, we hope
 "you will do all you can by petitioning, instruct-
 "ing, and remonstrating in our behalf; for if
 "you do not join us in destroying yourselves, we
 "tell you once for all, that we will neither buy
 "goods of you, nor pay you for those we have
 "already bought, for we are determined to carry
 "our point by one means or another."

I APPEAL to the understandings of my country-
 men whether this is an exaggerated representation
 of the Colony claims, as set forth and stated in
 their several pamphlets, and the resolutions of
 their public assemblies. And I think I need not
 use any further arguments to convince the mer-
 chants

chants and manufacturers of Great-Britain, how fatal to their interests the success of the Colonies in their designs must be. The continuance of their trade to the Colonies, clearly and entirely depends upon the laws of England having authority there. It is their operation which binds the commerce of the Colonies to this country. It is their operation which gives security to the property of the trader sent thither. Give up the authority of Parliament and there is an end to your trade, and a total loss of your property. But if that authority is supported and maintained, the trade of the Colonies must remain to Great-Britain, and the property you intrust them with will remain secure, protected by Acts of Parliament made in your behalf.

F I N I S.



Great-Britain, how
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